

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 EPG-02 FAA-00

DHA-02 ORM-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 SP-02 L-03 H-01

VO-03 SCA-01 INSE-00 IO-13 /059 W

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P 081555Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1721

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, PO, CVIS

SUBJ: CIVIL AVIATION: REQUEST FOR DELAY IN IMPLEMENTATION
OF SPECIAL EMIGRANT FARE

1. LOCAL TWA REP CALLED UPON ECON COUNSELOR JUNE 7 TO EXPRESS HIS STRONG OBJECTION TO OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES OF THE INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR EUROPEAN MIGRATION (ICEM). APPARENTLY ICEM HAS BEEN FINANCING TRAVEL OF PORTUGUESE EMIGRANTS, REGARDLESS OF THEIR FINANCIAL NEEDS, TO MADRID BY TRAIN OR BUS AND FROM THERE TO THE UNITED STATES VIA CHARTER AIRCRAFT. IT ANTICIPATES FINANCING TRAVEL OF SOME 4500 EMIGRANTS IN 1977 OUT OF AN ESTIMATED TOTAL APPROXIMATING 12,000. IN ORDER TO RECAPTURE THIS POTENTIAL CLIENTELE, PORTUGUESE NATIONAL AIRLINES (TAP) FILED ON MAY 10 A PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT ORDER WITH THE UNITED STATES CAB FOR SPECIAL EMIGRANT ONE-WAY LISBON/U.S. WINTER FARE OF \$313 AND SUMMER FARE OF \$382. PROPOSED FARES, UNLESS CAB UNEXPECTEDLY TURNS THEM DOWN, WOULD BECOME EFFECTIVE JUNE 10.

2. LOCAL TWA REP BELIEVES THIS FARE REDUCTION IS COMPLETELY UNJUSTIFIED AND WOULD CAUSE AIRLINES SERIOUS REVENUE LOSSES. HE FIRST SUGGESTED THAT EMBASSY HELP

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AVOID NEED FOR SPECIAL FARES BY STAMPING EMIGRANT PASS-PORTS TO INDICATE THAT THEIR VISAS ARE GOOD ONLY FOR DIRECT TRAVEL FROM PORTUGAL TO UNITED STATES. (VENEZUELAN EMBASSY REPORTEDLY USES THIS PROCEDURE.) IF THIS PROCEDURE WERE FOLLOWED, EMIGRANTS WOULD BE UNABLE TO UTILIZE CURRENT ICEM SPONSORED TRAVEL VIA MADRID AND TAP WOULD NOT FEEL OBLIGED TO REQUEST SPECIAL LOW FARES. ECON COUNSELOR

EXPRESSED STRONG DOUBT THAT EMBASSY COULD STAMP PASSPORTS
AS REQUESTED. PLEASE CONFIRM.

3. TWA REP THEN REQUESTED THAT CAB BE ASKED TO DELAY
DECISION ON FARES. HE NOTED THAT CAB SELDOM DENIES SUCH
FARES WHEN REQUEST IS SUPPORTED BY GOVERNMENT ORDER,
BUT ALLEGED THAT PRECEDENT EXISTS FOR DELAYING DECISION
AND IMPLEMENTATION FOR 30 DAYS. SUCH A DELAY WOULD, HE
SAID, GIVE TWA AND TAP TIME TO SEEK A MORE REASONABLE
SOLUTION THAN THAT OFFERED BY LOW FARES FOR ALL EMIGRANTS.

4. COMMENT: EMBASSY CONCURS THAT SPECIAL LOW RATES FOR ALL
EMIGRANTS, REGARDLESS OF THEIR FINANCIAL STATUS,
CONSTITUTES AN UNREASONABLE SOLUTION. NEITHER WOULD IT ACHIEVE
ICEM AND GOP PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE OF INCREASING THE NUMBER
OF EMIGRANTS. IF POSSIBLE, THEREFORE, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS
THAT CAB DECISION BE DELAYED AS REQUESTED. IT RECOMMENDS
ALSO THAT DEPT. REVIEW ICEM PROCEDURES TO INSURE THAT
THEY FULLY REPRESENT USG POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES.
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